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paraphernalia. The 'business' of *fitakũ* is to break a drought or to combat illness. I witnessed the ritual in July, during the so-called 'little dry season', when the usual spell of dry weather lasted unexpectedly long. The ritual took place at midday, in a clearing in the bush a few minutes walk from Doko. The place formed a rough circle whose entrance was flanked by two fresh mounds of earth. In the centre of the clearing, under a big tree, there was another, old, mound, said to cover the sacred stone from which the ritual derives its name; a small pot was half buried in the mound. The congregation consisted of the *Žigí*, who performed the sacrifice and spoke the prayer, and of family heads and other old men, the village chief not being present. In the sacrifice the blood of the slaughtered animal (a ram) and some beer were poured into the pot in the mound, thus making the 'stone drink', after which the meat was cooked, divided among the men present, and consumed there and then together with the rest of the beer. The priest ate and drank first, the others following in order of rank and age; a share of both meat and beer was kept for the chief, to be taken to his house after the ceremonial. In the prayer which accompanied the sacrifice the beer was referred to as *nuwã*, 'water' (as is usual in all Nupe sacrifices), so that the stone was made to 'drink' the fluid of which one stood in need. The prayer was brief and addressed to both *kuti* and God, thus—

'*Kuti*, the thing we are pouring, drink this water. *Sokó*, cause rain to fall, *kuti*, cause rain to fall. *Sokó*, cause that the whole town may prosper, that everyone may (have things) to eat, that everyone may have health.'

Finally, some leaves were plucked from the tree and stuck into the mound of earth underneath. This action was merely meant as a sign that the ceremony had been performed and had no ulterior or symbolic meaning. The whole ceremonial lasted a little over an hour.

According to Doko tradition Dibo Saba was the village chief who ruled at the time of Tsoede's advent, and the second in a long and (until recently) uninterrupted line of chiefs. It was he who received, at Tsoede's hand, the sacred bangles, and of all the graves of more remote ancestors his alone can still be identified. It lies outside Doko, on the old, now abandoned, site of the village, and today forms a narrow uncultivated space surrounded on all sides by farmland. The ritual is performed whenever some grave danger threatens the community, especially illness or, again, drought. The present chief of Doko performed it in 1930, during an outbreak of smallpox, and again in 1932, when a horse sickness attacked Doko. It was not performed either in 1934 or 1936,